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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/015,804	12/17/2001	Nobuyuki Takahashi	001425-121	7371
7590	04/13/2004		EXAMINER	
Platon N. Mandros BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P. P.O. Box 1404 Alexandria, VA 22313-1404			MOORE, KARLA A	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1763	

DATE MAILED: 04/13/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Advisory Action	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/015,804	TAKAHASHI, NOBUYUKI
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Karla Moore	1763

--The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

THE REPLY FILED 30 March 2004 FAILS TO PLACE THIS APPLICATION IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE. Therefore, further action by the applicant is required to avoid abandonment of this application. A proper reply to a final rejection under 37 CFR 1.113 may only be either: (1) a timely filed amendment which places the application in condition for allowance; (2) a timely filed Notice of Appeal (with appeal fee); or (3) a timely filed Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in compliance with 37 CFR 1.114.

PERIOD FOR REPLY [check either a) or b)]

- a) The period for reply expires 3 months from the mailing date of the final rejection.
- b) The period for reply expires on: (1) the mailing date of this Advisory Action, or (2) the date set forth in the final rejection, whichever is later. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of the final rejection.
ONLY CHECK THIS BOX WHEN THE FIRST REPLY WAS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE FINAL REJECTION. See MPEP 706.07(f).

Extensions of time may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a). The date on which the petition under 37 CFR 1.136(a) and the appropriate extension fee have been filed is the date for purposes of determining the period of extension and the corresponding amount of the fee. The appropriate extension fee under 37 CFR 1.17(a) is calculated from: (1) the expiration date of the shortened statutory period for reply originally set in the final Office action; or (2) as set forth in (b) above, if checked. Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of the final rejection, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

1. A Notice of Appeal was filed on _____. Appellant's Brief must be filed within the period set forth in 37 CFR 1.192(a), or any extension thereof (37 CFR 1.191(d)), to avoid dismissal of the appeal.
2. The proposed amendment(s) will not be entered because:
 - (a) they raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search (see NOTE below);
 - (b) they raise the issue of new matter (see Note below);
 - (c) they are not deemed to place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal; and/or
 - (d) they present additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

NOTE: ____.

3. Applicant's reply has overcome the following rejection(s): _____.
4. Newly proposed or amended claim(s) _____ would be allowable if submitted in a separate, timely filed amendment canceling the non-allowable claim(s).
5. The a) affidavit, b) exhibit, or c) request for reconsideration has been considered but does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because: See Continuation Sheet.
6. The affidavit or exhibit will NOT be considered because it is not directed SOLELY to issues which were newly raised by the Examiner in the final rejection.
7. For purposes of Appeal, the proposed amendment(s) a) will not be entered or b) will be entered and an explanation of how the new or amended claims would be rejected is provided below or appended.

The status of the claim(s) is (or will be) as follows:

Claim(s) allowed: _____.

Claim(s) objected to: _____.

Claim(s) rejected: 1-15.

Claim(s) withdrawn from consideration: _____.

8. The drawing correction filed on _____ is a) approved or b) disapproved by the Examiner.

9. Note the attached Information Disclosure Statement(s)(PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____.

10. Other: _____.

*P. Hassanzadeh
Primary Examiner
AV 1763*

Continuation of 5. does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because:

Applicant argues that Hosokawa does not teach transfer of substrates in the same orientation as Coad or Hayashi or the claimed invention. Examiner points out that Hosokawa is not relied upon for this teaching, as Coad and Hayashi clearly disclose the teaching and the benefits of transferring substrates in such an orientation. Examiner also points out that this difference in Hosokawa would in no way preclude one of ordinary skill in the art from recognizing advantages of other disclosures/teachings in Hosokawa.

Applicant also argues that there is no motivation to combine the "alignment" teachings of Hosokawa with those of Coad or Hayashi. Again, Examiner disagrees. Similar to Hosokawa, Coad is apparently concerned with alignment of substrates/a carry system with processing chambers, load lock chambers, etc. (see, for example, column 7, row 66 through column 8, row 2). Because Coad recognizes that alignment is a factor in the transfer and processing of substrates within the disclosed system, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to look to other pieces of prior art for additional ideas/solutions for ensuring proper alignment of substrates within a processing system involving transfer of substrates. Applicant argues that the "alignment system" of Hosokawa would not be functional in Coad or Hayashi. Examiner points out that what is claimed in the instant application and what is relied upon in Hosokawa is an "alignment chamber" capable housing a substrate carrier that moves in a plurality of directions (as claimed) in order to align a substrate as necessary. An alignment chamber, such as that disclosed in Hosokawa, inserted in a processing system between the chamber where substrates enter the system and chambers where the substrates are actually processed is a structure that would be beneficial to the prior art for reasons/motivation which are presented in the the most recent office action.

Applicant further submits that it is quite clear from the disclosure of Hosokawa that the chamber that corresponds to the hermetically connected alignment chamber (as described in the previous office action) is in no way hermetically connected to any other chamber. Firstly, Examiner has taken the phrase "hermetically connected" to mean air-tightly connected, as this is commensurate with how Merriam Webster Online dictionary defines hermetic and because no other alternate/special definition was found in Applicant's specification. If Applicant intended to use an alternate/special definition for the purpose of this application, Applicant should bring this to the Examiners attention. Secondly, Examiner points out that the claimed invention is an apparatus, thus, at what point in an intended method, Applicant intends for the chamber to be hermetically connected to another chamber in the processing system is irrelevant; what is relevant is whether or not the prior art apparatus is capable of being hermetically connected as claimed. As pointed out in the previous office action, the alignment chamber is capable of being hermetically connected to the through chamber, through the load lock chambers. The load lock chambers are specifically provided to isolate the atmospheres of the two chambers. Applicant asserts that the alignment chamber in Hosokawa is maintained at atmospheric pressure and thus is not hermetically sealed to the load lock chambers. Examiner is not sure how this supports Applicant's position, as the pressure at which the alignment chamber is maintained does not necessarily correlate with the fact that air does not pass from the alignment chamber to the through chamber. Also, Examiner points out that the load lock chambers must be capable of being hermetically sealed from the alignment chamber as disclosed in Hosokawa. As mentioned above, the load lock chambers are provided for the specific purpose of isolating the vacuum atmosphere of the throughput chamber and the atmospheric-pressure atmosphere of the alignment chamber. This is well known in the art.

Finally, as noted above, Hosokawa is not relied upon for teaching an orientation of a substrate. Hosokawa is relied upon for teaching providing an alignment chamber provided in a multi-chamber system for the purpose of aligning a substrate/carrier for further movement and/or processing in the system.